

2 THE
POSSIBILITY
OF *2*
Apparitions.

Being an Answer to this
Question,

*Whether can Departed Souls
(Souls separated from their
Bodies) so appear, as to be
Visibly Seen and Conversed
with here upon Earth?*

By a Divine of the Church
of England.

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THE
POSSIBILITY,
OF
Apparitions.

THAT there are
Spirits and Incor-
poreal Beings, is
no less certain than that
there are Men. None but
a *Sadducee* or an *Atheist*
will pretend to deny it.
There is an *Invisible*
World as well as *Visible*;
A 2 There-

Therefore there are *Invisible* Inhabitants as well as *Visible*, is rational and convincing.

That there is an *Invisible* World, is undeniably proved from the Observation of this that is *Visible*.

Lift up thine Eyes towards Heaven, O thou dull unthinking *Atheist*, and tell me what thou seeest. Observe that vast *Expansum*, that stately Canopy, that Triumphal Arch that hangs over thy Head. Canst thou be so stupid as to imagine, that this is the *Terminus*, the Boun-

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Boundaries of the Universe? Is there nothing further than what thou seest, or beyond what thine Eye can reach? Sure thou canst not be so foolish as to have such a Fancy.

This being granted, That there are vast unknown Regions, far above and beyond these Visible Heavens, Canst thou be so mistaken as to suppose, that those Stately Apartments are empty and unfurnished, like a wild Desert without Inhabitants?

There are *Therefore* Spirits and Immortal Souls.

We are next to enquire;
Whether these Spirits, and
separated Souls, can so ap-
pear, as to be visibly seen
and conversed with here
upon Earth ?

If an *Atheist* shall here
tell me (and it is a Po-
pular Plea),

That though he hath
been in Place where
such Passages have been
pretended, yet he never
could see any of these Ghosts,
he never could Discourse
with an Apparition, though
he hath much desired it.

To

To this I do thus

Answer.

That this is but a
Negative Testimo-
ny, and the Argument
drawn from it is false and
unconcluding.

'Tis just as wise an Ar-
gument as this. I never
in my Life saw a *Tartar*,
Therefore there are no
such Men. For though
you and I, and Thousands
more, have never seen any
of those Rugged Fellows;
yet there are those who
have seen them, and too

A 4 many

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many who have felt them.

And thus it is as to Spirits and Departed Souls.

The Question is not what these Atheists have seen, but what other Men may have seen. Possibly, as a just Judgment upon them, to harden them in their Infidelity, God may have closed *their* Eyes and Ears, when the Eyes and Ears of Others have been open.

We are therefore to Examine, Whether such Apparitions are not possible, though some Men have never seen them.

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But before I proceed to my Proofs, it will be pertinent to Premise these Two Things.

I. That this Question concerning Apparitions is no vain Speculation, nor idle Curiosity, but is an Enquiry of the greatest Importance; in the Defence of which the Christian Religion is highly concerned.

We are fallen into an Age, wherein among some Men, and those not a few, Atheism is in fashion. And 'tis Modish, and a piece of Gallantry to be an Infidel. 'Tis Manly,

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may, Heroically Great, to have outgrown the Panick Terrors of another World.

We have lived to hear the *Doctrine of Spirits* Derided ; and that Grand Fundamental Article of our Faith, *Of Life Everlasting*, and of Living again, to be not only Denied, but Burlesqued and Ridiculed.

Now in such an Age as this, it is not only seasonable but necessary , to examine the Truth of these Apparitions.

For if these Apparitions are real, and what they pretend to be, they

are

of Apparitions. 11

are then a most sensible Proof of Spirits, and another Life. They are evident Conviction, That the Soul is a separate Being distinct from the Body. That it is Immortal, and can Live and Subsist without the Body. That it may again be reunited to the Body, and together with the Body, shall Live and Subsist, either Happy or Miserable, to all Eternity.

These Things are evident and Consequential upon the Truth of Apparitions. And therefore it is of great Concernment to

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to establish and confirm
them.

2. I must Premise and
Acknowledge, *That there*
is a great deal of Cheat
and Delusion concerning Ap-
paritions. And that there
are abundance of Lying
Stories of this nature a-
mongst the Vulgar.

The Generality of Man-
kind is very credulous,
ignorant, and Superstiti-
ous; greedily gaping af-
ter Stories of this Nature.
And there have been
those in all Ages, who
have made both Sport
and Advantage of their
Fears

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Fears, and have not failed, on all suitable Occasions, to practise upon them.

This hath been very frequent in Popish Countries, for the Confirmation of *Purgatory*, and other *Romish* Doctrines. And on this account it is, That such Legends, and Lying Stories of Apparitions and Miracles, have been so famous amongst them.

And even amongst *Protestants*, abundance of these Apparitions have been mere Banter and Collusion, or the Impressions

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sions of Fear, and a Melancholy Imagination.

This I readily grant.

Which being Premised, I now proceed to examine the *Possibility* of Human Apparitions.

I, *Angels have appeared, Therefore Human Souls may likewise appear.*

The Force and Logick of the Argument doth lye in this: That separated Souls are of the same Nature with Angels; Spiritual and Incorporeal as they are. And therefore,

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if Angels have visibly appeared, Departed Souls may appear likewise.

Now that Angels have visibly appeared, and sensibly Conversed and Discoursed with Men and Women, is so frequently recorded in Holy Scripture, that it needs no Proof.

From whence I infer thus :

That since Angels have so frequently Appeared, Human Souls Departed (when God shall please to permit or appoint them) they have Capacity to Appear also.

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2. Human Souls Departed have not only a *Capacity* to Appear, as having Life, and Sense, and Motion, but also they may sometimes have an *Inclination* to Appear, and to be employed for the *Service of Men*. And this we presume to suppose, because of that great Love and Affection they still retain for their Friends and Acquaintance amongst whom they lived, and from whom they so lately came.

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But against this Supposition, there is a noted and Popular

Objection.

B*Lessed Souls Departed are at rest. They rest from their Labours. Rev. 14. 13. And therefore 'tis a vain Fancy to imagine, that they can be so far disturbed, as to leave their Heavenly Habitations, and to come again into this lower World.*

To

To this I thus

Answer.

THat since the Blessed Angels are not confined to their Heavenly Habitations, but are often sent to this Lower World; why should we think that the Souls of the Just are so limited and restrained, as that upon some special Service, *They* may not likewise be sent to us Men for our Benefit and Advantage?

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They rest indeed from their *Labours* and their *Sorrows*, but not from their *Duty* and their *Service*.

In short; Why may not Souls Departed, as well as Angels, be *Ministring Spirits*, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation?

If now your Curiosity shall further prompt you to examine the *Modus* of such Apparitions; How and in what Manner Departed Souls do appear?

Are

Are they reunited to their Terrestrial Bodies ? That is , Do they re-assume those gross and sluggish Bodies from which they were separated by Death ? Or rather , Is not such their Appearance in certain Ætherial Bodies, or Airy Vehicles (as Philosophy calls them) which being pure and refined, do easily and in an instant take any Impression, and are moulded into any Shape ?

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To this, at present, I shall make no other Reply than thus :

Such Apparitions may be true, though we are not able to explain the Manner of them.

For though , as I have already granted , abundance of these Apparitions have been mere Banter and Collusion , or the Impressions of Fear , and a Melancholy Imagination ; yet some of these Appearances have been so Publickly Visible , and so well

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well Attested, that if there
is such a Thing as *Fides*
Historica, and if we may
believe any Passage which
we our Selves did not
actually see, the Truth of
such Apparitions is not to
be Disputed.



F I N I S.

